



# Smallpox Brief: March 25, 2003

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES

## **Topic: MORE THAN 9,000 SMALLPOX VACCINE DOSES NOW SHIPPED TO CALIFORNIA'S LOCAL HEALTH DEPARTMENTS**

As part of its ongoing effort to protect the public from the potential threat of smallpox being used as a weapon of terror, the California Department of Health Services (CDHS) this week shipped 700 doses of smallpox vaccine to five local health departments throughout the state (please see attached list). This shipment is subsequent to previous vaccine shipments to local health departments totaling 8,400 doses. This brings the cumulative total to 9,100 doses of smallpox vaccine that have now been shipped to 56 local health departments statewide.

The smallpox vaccine has been shipped to those local health departments whose vaccination plans were approved by CDHS and indicated their readiness to receive the vaccine. Local health departments are vaccinating healthcare workers who volunteer to be members of smallpox response teams. These teams will be responsible for providing medical care to any individuals who are exposed to smallpox, conducting disease investigation and vaccinating additional health care workers in the event of a smallpox outbreak.

"While the risk of a smallpox outbreak is low, California continues to coordinate with local health departments throughout the state to protect the public from any potential outbreak of this deadly disease," said State Health Director Diana M. Bontá, R.N., Dr. P.H. "Our first focus remains on vaccinating healthcare workers who would respond to a potential outbreak, and we've made great progress working with local health officials to implement plans for the voluntary vaccination of these workers."

Smallpox vaccinations will be offered to healthcare workers on a strictly voluntary basis. CDHS has conducted training sessions throughout the state with vaccinators and healthcare workers to educate them about the smallpox virus as well as the smallpox vaccine and its associated health risks. Vaccination is not recommended for the general public at this time.

For more information about smallpox in English and Spanish, please visit <http://www.dhs.ca.gov/smallpox>, or call the Governor's Office of Emergency Services Safety Information and Referral Line at (800) 550-5234, TDD for the hearing impaired (800) 550-5281.

### **Smallpox Vaccine Shipments to Local Health Departments**

Health Department	Number of Vaccine Doses Shipped
El Dorado	100
Modoc	100
San Diego (second shipment)	200
Sonoma	200
Sutter	100